

# EPAlog

*weekly log of significant events*



Vol. I

May 15, 1972

No. 2

"We Print All the News that Fits."

AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE. . . "The public will not tolerate a government that is conducted in secret. A Federal agency that wishes to have any credibility with the public must be frank and open in its conduct of affairs." So stated AA John Quarles in testimony before the Foreign Operations and Government Information Subcommittee of the House Government Operations Committee on April 11. . . EPA procedure: ". . . staff personnel who receive a request for documents may grant the request but may not deny the request without checking with the Office of General Counsel. . . Thus, staff personnel must go to some trouble to deny a request, while granting a request is less troublesome since high level clearance is not needed. We hope and expect that this procedure will encourage staff personnel to respond promptly and affirmatively to requests for information." . . . EPA has also adopted final regs on requests under the Freedom of Information Act for trade secrets or other confidential information submitted by industry. . . Final standards will be published in the Federal Register May 16. . . The added provisions spell out the procedures to be followed when members of the public request information claimed by the person submitting it to be trade secrets or otherwise confidential.

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HAPPINESS IS GETTING A LETTER. . . "Dear Mr. Ruckelshaus, I am studying about Indiana in my 4th grade class. We had to draw names and I got yours. I need some information on you and your work, because there is nothing in the encyclopedia. . . . WDR asks Jim Barnes "Barnes, why haven't we got anything in the encyclopedia?"

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DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE. . . Here's a run down on the status of Water Quality Standards for Interstate Waters. . . 46 plans have now been completely approved and eight others are in varying stages of review. . . A total of 54 have been submitted for all states and territories.

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NEWS FROM THE NOISE OFFICE. . . The Office of Noise Abatement and Control presented last week in Houston, Texas, a multi-media (sound and light) show on noise entitled "Listen". . . Developed by the University of Texas School of Architecture for EPA, the film offers a subjective presentation on noise and the human perception of it.

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WHAT'S BUGGING HER NOW....EPA now has its first female Pesticides Inspector... Pauline E. Knight, Region IV, is in training in practical application and interpretation of regulations, procedures and restrictive orders concerned with the investigational and regulatory programs for the enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act and its amendments.

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#### A MATTER OF POLICY

EPA does not subscribe to wholesale amendments to the National Environmental Policy Act. The question--currently undergoing vigorous debate--is whether the regulatory activities of any federal agency should be exempt from the requirements of NEPA. We have sought legislative relief from last December's KALUR decision which was the result of a suit that challenged the government's right to issue carefully conditioned permits to plants discharging into the nation's waters. The judge held that no permit could be issued unless it was accompanied by an environmental impact statement.

It is EPA's position that impact statements should not be required for the issuance of permits, and the decision is being appealed. We are also seeking relief from Congress.

To force an environmental impact statement to be filed on each permit or even on a large portion of them would delay environmental enhancement. This seems to fly in the face of the purpose of NEPA.

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STRONGER THAN DIRT. . .Recently a committee on non-government scientists reviewed all available information on the health effects of nitrilitriacetic acid (NTA). NTA is one of a number of chemicals being investigated to replace phosphates in detergents. As a result of this study, HEW will continue to oppose use of NTA in laundry detergents until studies are outlined and completed on NTA's possible carcinogenic effects and on NTA's possible mutagenic effects. . .In the interim, EPA is accelerating its efforts to determine whether NTA poses a threat to the environment.

GRANTS. . .EPA awarded approximately \$50 million in grants during the month of March, bringing the total for the current fiscal year to \$570,155,000. As in previous months, the largest number, 147, went to State and local jurisdictions for construction or improvement of wastewater treatment facilities. . .Those remaining were allotted to the categories of Research and Demonstration, 55, and Manpower and Development Training, 42.

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HERE COME DE JUDGE. . .In its challenge to the first order issued by EPA for violation of an approved State implementation plan, the Federal Court in Wilmington, Delaware, decided against Getty Oil Company. . .Getty instituted suit April 25 to obtain a Temporary Restraining Order against the EPA order, issued April 18, requiring Delmarva Power and Light Company to stop burning high-sulfur fuel at its Delaware City generating plant by May 1. . .Delmarva has been using fuel with up to 6.5 to 7% sulfur content although the approved State plan for sulfur oxides requires use of fuel with no more than 3.5 percent sulfur as of last January 1.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK. . .A man writing from California asks that he be mailed a check for his services and submits an idea for attaining pure air. . ."Develope (sic) a Grass Lawn that will grow upside down on the ceiling. Install on all ceilings in buildings... then no matter how tall the trees are cut down to build a building on the same side, the building will be taller than the trees and then with green grass ceilings required in every floor will aid Air Purity instead of Air Pollution."

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AIR AND WATER PLANNING WORKSHOP. . .An Air and Water Workshop will be held May 15, 16, and 17, 1972, at the Maryland Inn, Annapolis, Maryland. Sessions will begin Monday morning and the workshop will conclude at noon on Wednesday. Key individuals attending the workshop from each Regional Office: the Director, Air and Water Division and the key Air and Water planner responsible for SIP's and basins.

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ARTIFICIAL OCEAN. . .EPA will build a \$1.8 million concrete test tank in New Jersey to test equipment for cleaning up spills from oil and other hazardous materials...Data collected from the tank will help EPA reduce the impact of accidental discharges from hazardous pollutants upon beaches and the marine environment.

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WE GET MORE LETTERS. . . One citizen suggests that water pollution can be controlled by dumping large amounts of apple cider vinegar into polluted lakes which "will keep the growing of water plants in retarded state, would not kill fish and would destroy bacteria. . ."

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ALL IN THE FAMILY. . . Our apologies for an error in last week's issue: WDR will appear on Barbara Walters' "Not For Women Only" this week, May 15-19; Show airs 9-9:30 each morning on WRC-TV, Channel 4.

May 16. . . WDR to present award to SEVENTEEN MAGAZINE Poster Contest Winner at lunch in Corcoran Museum.

May 16. . . PM. . . WDR to speak to the Kenmore Association in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary; then he heads. . . . .

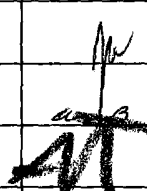
SOUTH OF THE BORDER: WDR will travel to Mexico City on May 17 for two days of talks with Mexican environmental officials concerning common pollution problems. Traveling with the Administrator will be AA Sansom, Assoc. Admin Green, Deputy AA Hale, and Air Technical Director Ludwig. While in Mexico, WDR will visit recycling plant in Guadalajara.

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Administrator Ruckelshaus delivered the commencement address Saturday at North Carolina State University. Excerpts from his speech follow:

"If many people had their choice they would prefer to live on farms or in small communities--or at least out of cities. . . . Most Americans are born, study, work, love, recreate and die in the city. . . . By the time your children go to college, we will be almost totally a nation of gigantic regional cities. . . stretching along our coasts and around the Great Lakes.

"At the turn of the next century probably 50 percent of the world population will be urban. . . Our cities have grown too large for comfort. . . They are overloaded, dirty, unsafe, unhealthy and unstable. This is not the fault of those who live there; it is not a matter of race or education or income or personal virtues, but of circumstances we have created. . . .

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**Remarks:**

Note the "morsle" items in  
 this EPA newsletter Not a  
 bad idea

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